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HELEN KELLER

By JOHN HITZ

Centuries ago, records tell us of highly educated persons who were either blind or deaf ; but of educated blind deaf-mutes, up to the beginning of the nineteenth century no mention appears, and of those recorded, only one, and that one of the twentieth century, has achieved a collegiate degree, namely, Helen Keller. It remained for her indisputably to prove the fallacy of the traditional pedagogical limitations heretofore supposed to prevail in regard to the educational ability of those bereft of what so far have been considered the most essential organs of perception in attaining academic distinction.

Helen Adams Keller was born June 27, 1880, in Tuscumbia, Alabama. At the time of her birth, and during the first eighteen months of her life, she enjoyed the best of health, including full possession of her senses and infantile faculties. Her paternal ancestry embraced men of prominence in the South, whose lineage was of Swiss origin and noted for scholarly achievements, while maternally her ancestors were directly connected with the distinguished Adams and Everett families of New England whose ancestors in England, the MacAdams, claim to be descendants of the Saxon kings. When eighteen months of age (February, 1882) Helen had an acute attack of gastritis, followed by a malignant fever, which resulted in complete loss of hearing and sight. She disclaims having had any recollection on recovery except "confused memories" of what had preceded this illness ; in fact, she insists on having remembered nothing, and having had only "vague impressions" of things that transpired, until five years later when she acquired a definite knowledge of words, and her active mind could clearly formulate ideas in the fixed matrix which spoken, written, and printed language provides. Previous to this achievement, during her prolonged period of speechlessness, Helen Keller's mental activity, it



HELEN KELLER

1, At Seven Years. 2, At Thirteen Years. 3, At Twenty-two Years. 4, Miss Keller and Dr Alexander Graham Bell. 5, Miss Sullivan Reading and Spelling at the same time into Miss Keller's hand. 6, In College Vestments.

would seem, sought expression in manifold, and especially in mischievous and combative, ways, such as unruly manifestations against the reprimands of her grandmother. In one well authenticated instance (after having discovered the function of a key) she quietly locked her mother in a pantry, where the latter was compelled to remain for an hour or more. Mrs Keller pounded on the door to no purpose ; Helen seated on the floor outside, felt the jar of pounding, and laughed the while with great glee. This performance and its revelation of what seemed a singularly bad spirit convinced the parents that the child must be taught and made to behave, naturally so by some instructor specially qualified to undertake so difficult a task. On the occasion of Helen's father consulting Doctor Chisholm of Baltimore in regard to her case, the latter advised seeing Dr Alexander Graham Bell of Washington, who no doubt would be able to suggest how a suitable instructor might best be obtained. Doctor Bell's advice resulted eventually in securing the services of a graduate of the Perkins Institute for the Blind at South Boston, Miss Anne Mansfield Sullivan, whose eyesight had recently been restored by an operation. After a brief period of special preparation, the following March (1887) she entered upon what promised to be her life work, and developed into one of the most remarkable achievements in the history of pedagogy.

As can well be imagined, the case, owing to the extremely refractory spirit of the child at the time, presented to the teacher almost insurmountable obstacles, for little Helen resorted to the same tactics with Miss Sullivan that she had applied in her intercourse with her parents. But her teacher proved equal to the task. Inflexible determination, at times even physical force, yet always tempered with maternal affection and unwearying patience, coupled with an unshakable faith in the eventual success of her well-nigh inspired efforts, ultimately triumphed. After a voluntary isolation of herself and pupil in a cottage apart from the parental residence, devoted to "seven weeks of the hardest work she had ever done," this pedagogical Columbus was finally rewarded with the discovery of the realm within whose bounds lay untold happiness for her pupil and inexpressible satisfaction for herself. How this was brought about in part is told in Helen's own words, when, five years later, at

the age of thirteen, she tells in a brief autobiography of her being taught the manual or finger alphabet.

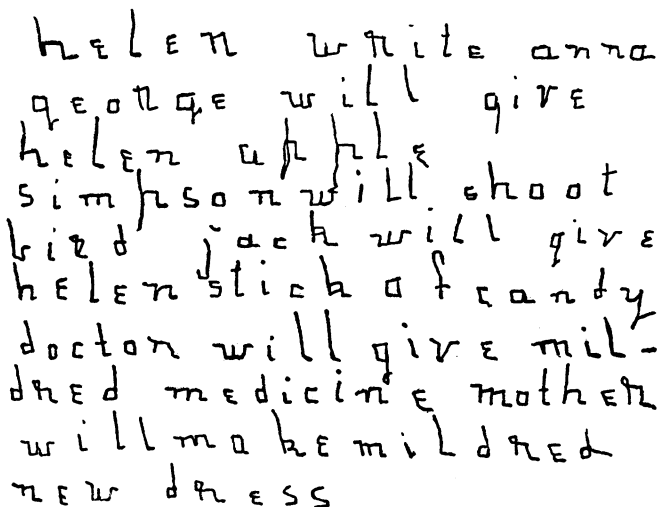
"I had not the least idea that my finger-play was the magical key which was to unlock my mind's prison door, and open wide the windows of my soul. I had learned eighteen or twenty words before that thought flashed into my mind as the sun breaks upon the sleeping world, and in that moment of illumination the secret of language was revealed to me, and I caught a glimpse of the beautiful country I was about to explore.

"Teacher had been trying all the morning to make me understand that the mug and the milk in the mug had different names; but I was very dull, and kept spelling 'milk' for mug, and 'mug' for milk, until teacher must have lost all hope of making me see my mistake. At last she got up, gave me the mug, and led me out of the door to the pump close by. Some one was pumping water, and as the cool fresh stream burst forth, teacher made me put my mug under the spout, and spelled w-a-t-e-r, water. That word startled my soul, and it awoke, full of the spirit of the morning, full of joyous, exultant song. Until that day my mind had been like a darkened chamber, waiting for words to enter and light the lamp, which is thought.

"I learned a great many words that day. I do not remember what they all were; but I do know that 'mother,' 'father,' and 'teacher' were among them. It would have been difficult to find a happier little child than I was that night as I lay in my crib and thought over the joy the day had brought me, and for the first time I longed for a new day to come. The next morning I awoke with joy in my heart. Everything I touched seemed to quiver with life. It was because I saw everything with the new, strange, beautiful sight which had come to me. I was never angry after that, because I understood what my friends said to me, and I was very busy learning many wonderful things. I was never still during the first glad days of my freedom. I was constantly spelling and acting out the words as I spelled them. I would run, jump, skip, and swing, no matter where I happened to be. Everything was budding and blossoming. The honeysuckle hung in long garlands deliciously fragrant, and the roses had never been so beautiful before. Teacher and I lived out of doors from morning until night, and I rejoiced greatly in the forgotten light and sunshine found again."

Within three months Helen had learned to use the stylus employed by the blind in writing, and had written her first letter (June, 1887). Acquisition of the power of reading readily the

embossed print familiar to the blind followed immediately. This was succeeded within three years by her acquiring (1890), through the special instruction of Miss Sarah Fuller, the ability to speak orally, or "talk with her mouth," as she designated speech, an achievement she had insisted on learning, and which afforded her unbounded delight. The art of using an ordinary typewriter had



helen write anna
 george will give
 helen will
 simpson will shoot
 bird jack will give
 helen stick a candy
 doctor will give mil-
 dred medicine mother
 will make mil dred
 new dress

FIG. 14. — Helen Keller's first composition.

meanwhile also been accomplished. Helen thus briefly relates how Miss Fuller taught her to speak :

"She passed my hand lightly over her face, and let me feel the position of her tongue and lips when she made a sound. I was eager to imitate every motion, and in an hour had learned six elements of speech : M. P. A. S. T. I. Miss Fuller gave me eleven lessons in all. I shall never forget the surprise and delight I felt when I uttered my first connected sentence, 'it is warm.' It is true, they were broken and stammering syllables ; but they were human speech. My soul came out of bondage and was reaching through those broken symbols of speech to all knowledge and all faith."

In this connection I would refer to some interesting recent observations made by an eminent scholar¹ of Vienna on the subject

¹ Prof. Dr W. Jerusalem in the *Oestreichische Rundschau*, 432-433, Wien, July 6, 1905.

of what another great man of science calls the "Universal Sense," the Sense of Touch :

"In concluding my treatise on Laura Bridgman fifteen years ago, I stated that the education and development of Laura Bridgman, and others who shared her lot, primarily teaches us that the scope of touch and motor sensations can solely serve the world as a gateway to mental conceptions. This assertion in the education of Marie Heurtin attains its final verification. In the case of Laura Bridgman, Helen Keller, and most others, we were unable definitely to ascertain the exact extent to which their infantile receptiveness may have contributed in arousing mental activity. In the case of Marie Heurtin, however, who was born sightless and deaf, there is no questioning the fact that the senses of sight and hearing have given rise to subconscious sensations. All that she has mentally achieved heretofore, and may hereafter achieve, must exclusively be ascribed to the sense of touch and to muscular motor sensation [*Muskel-Empfindungen*]. Marie Heurtin not only enables us conclusively to judge of the extent touch and motor sensations are capable of exercising — but more. We can no longer deny the fact that sense perceptions serve only as *Auslösende Reize* [stimulating solvents], by means of which the central power of our soul life is awakened. The sensual conceptions of thought as presented by Locke, and further elaborated by Lamettrie and Coniellac, and as latterly again asserted by prominent students of natural philosophy, are no longer tenable, confronted by the facts presented in Marie Heurtin's education. Whatever comes by external contact is only the *formulating* power of our Internal. From within we learn to know the world outwardly by adapting the latter to our organization. Hence we learn that it is not so essential whether these perceptions are solved by either sight, aural or touch sensation. Surely a something mysterious must exist within, qualified to give us a conception and understanding of the world.

"The teacher of Marie Heurtin had faith that such a mental or spiritual power existed within her animal-like pupil, and her faith has been confirmed."

All of the absolutely requisite appliances of intercourse with others, and the channels for readily acquiring the knowledge she so eagerly yearned to possess, were now made available to her, and having thus arrived at the portals of Helen Keller's virtual entrance into conscious life, I will leave the faithful and gifted teacher to say

how she proceeded to unfold a mind deprived of what are generally considered the two most essential media of brain perception.

“Language grows out of life, out of its needs and experiences, its joys and sorrows, its dreams and realities. At first my little pupil’s mind was all but vacant. Up to the time when I began to teach her, she had no means of registering on its blank pages her childish impressions and observations. She had been living in a world she could not realize. Language and knowledge are like Siamese twins; they are indissolubly connected, they are interdependent. Good work in language presupposes and necessitates a real knowledge of things. As soon as my little pupil grasped the idea that everything had a name, and that by means of the manual alphabet these names could be transmitted from one to another, I proceeded to awaken her further interest in the objects whose names she learned to spell with such evident joy. I never taught language for the *purpose of teaching it*; but invariably *used* language as a medium for the conveyance of thought: thus the learning of language was coincident with the acquisition of knowledge. In order to use language intelligently, one must have something to talk about, and having something to talk about is the result of general culture; no amount of language training will enable our little children to use language with ease and fluency, unless they have something clearly in their minds which they wish to communicate or unless we succeed in awakening in them a desire to know what is in the minds of others. From the very first Helen was eager and enthusiastic in pursuit of knowledge.

“She had one advantage over ordinary children—nothing from without distracted her attention; so that each new thought made upon her mind *a distinct impression*, which was rarely forgotten. At first I did not attempt to confine my pupil to any systematic course of study. I felt that she would accomplish more if allowed to follow her own natural impulses. I always tried to find out what interested her most, and made that the starting point for the new lesson, whether or not it had any bearing on the lesson I had planned to teach, and her eager inquiries often led us far away from the subject with which we began.

“Helen acquired language in an objective way, by *practice and habit*, rather than by study of rules and definitions. Grammar with its puzzling array of classifications, nomenclatures and paradigms, was *wholly discarded* in her education. She learned language by being brought in contact with the living language itself; she was made to deal with it in everyday conversations, and in her books, and to turn it over in a variety of ways

until she had mastered its anatomy. I talked to her almost incessantly in her waking hours, and encouraged her to talk to me. I spelled into her hand a description of what was taking place around us; what I saw, what I was doing, what others were doing, anything, everything. I talked to her with my fingers as I should have talked to her with my mouth had she been a hearing child, and no doubt I talked much more with my fingers, and more constantly than I should have done with my mouth; for had she possessed the use of sight and hearing, she would have been less dependent on me for entertainment and instruction.

"Very early in her education I led her to observe and describe flowers and animals. A flower or an insect often furnished material for a long and interesting language lesson. I did not attempt to make these lessons in zoology and botany formally scientific. I introduced them early in her education for the purpose of cultivating her observation, furnishing themes for thought, and to fill her mind with beautiful pictures and inspiring ideals. Material for language lessons, knowledge of facts, and greater power of expression were ends obtained through these lessons; but were not the most important aims. . . .

"Books have played a very important part in Helen's education. As soon as she had learned the raised letters, I gave her books to read and I doubt very much if I shall be able to make you understand the importance and advantage that books have been to her in acquiring a command of idiomatic English; the advantage has certainly been incalculable. I am confident that the ease and fluency with which she uses language are in large part due to the fact that embossed books were placed in her hands as soon as she had learned the letters. She has, like many hearing persons, a natural aptitude for comprehending and using language as soon as it has been acquired. I think also much of the fluency with which she uses language is due to the fact that nearly every impression she receives *comes through the medium of language*. But after due allowance has been given to Helen's natural aptitude for acquiring language, and to the advantage resulting from her peculiar environment, I think we will still find that the constant companionship of good books has been of supreme importance in her education.

"In speaking of what books have been to her, Helen herself says: 'I read my first story on May-day, and ever since books and I have been loving friends and inseparable companions. They have been my faithful teacher in all that is good and beautiful; their pages have carried me back to ancient times and shown me Egypt, Greece, Rome; they have introduced me to Kings, Heroes, and Gods; and they have revealed to me great thoughts, great deeds.' "

Her teacher continues :

“It is not necessary that a child should understand every word in a book before he can read it with pleasure and profit. Indeed only such explanations should be given as are really essential. *Helen drank in language which she at first could not understand, and it remained in her mind until needed*, when it fitted itself naturally and easily into her conversation and compositions. Thus she drew her vocabulary from the best source, standard literature, and when the occasion came, she was able to use it without effort.”

This fully coincides with Dr A. Graham Bell's oft-expressed educational theorem : “*I would have a deaf child read books in order to learn language, instead of learning the language in order to read books*” — applicable equally well, it is claimed, to hearing children.

Miss Sullivan proceeds further :

“Helen has had the best and purest models in language constantly presented to her, and her conversation and her writings are unconscious reproductions of what she has read. Reading, I think, should be kept independent of the regular school exercises. Children should be encouraged to read for the pure delight of it. The attitude of the child towards his books should be that of unconscious receptivity. This means true reading : reading not only for entertainment, but for intellectual enrichment and enlargement. The great works of the imagination ought to become part of their lives, as they were once of the very substance of the men who wrote them. It is true that the more sensitive and imaginative the mind is that receives the thought-picture and images of literature, the nicer the vitality of feeling, the freshness and eagerness of interest, and the spiritual insight which proclaims the artistic temperament, and naturally she has a more active and intense joy in life simply *as* life, and in nature, books and people, than less gifted mortals. Her mind is so filled with the beautiful thoughts and ideals of the great poets, that nothing seems commonplace to her : for her imagination colors all life with its own rich hues.”

Here I would interject some observations relative to imagination in the education of the blind-deaf, ascribed to Doctor Dewey, the eminent psychologist of Chicago University, in which it is claimed that in certain phases of the imaginative faculty they *excel* all

others. So pronounced is this characteristic that the eminent authority mentioned places first in this respect the blind-deaf, the simply blind next, then normal men and women, and the deaf last of all.¹ Doctor Dewey cites the case of Helen Keller simply as typical rather than abnormal, and alludes to the "great danger of laying too much stress upon *sense* perception" in the education of children, adding :

"The wonderful and varied imagery which these minds in silence and darkness have created for themselves stands as a perpetual challenge to those teachers who are encouraging their pupils to revel in the endless panorama of sense perception. It is not necessary to make our pupils blind-deaf, but it may be well sometimes to require them to shut their eyes and ears, if need be, *and think*. I can conceive of no more important school exercise than that which will induce the child to bring into consciousness images of objects that are *not* present to the senses. This done again and again, and the dissociative process begins. Gradually each image becomes disengaged from the thing of sense that brought it into consciousness."

This verifies what the sculptor, Horatio Stone, said to me personally years ago, "A well defined ideal, after all, is solely the true," and we appreciate more fully the depths of thought which prompted the poet Clarence Stedman to close the beautiful poem he dedicated to Helen Keller, with the far-sighted words :

"Not as we see
Earth, sky, insensate forms ourselves,
Thou seest, but vision free
Thy fancy soars and delves,
Albeit no sounds to us relate
The wondrous things
Thy brave imaginings
Within their starry night create.

Pity thy unconfined
Clear spirit, whose enfranchised eyes
Use not their grosser sense?
Ah, no ! thy bright intelligence
Hath its own Paradise,

¹ *Arkansas Optic*, March 3d, 1900.

A realm wherein to hear and see
Things hidden from our kind.
Not thou, not thou, 'tis we
Are deaf, are dumb, are blind ! ”

At this period, when thirteen years of age, it was that Helen Keller, under the wise guidance of Miss Sullivan aided by special teachers, really entered upon a regular system of academic training. How she regarded this step in her life, the entry she made in her diary at the time, speaks for itself :

DEAR DIARY : “ To-day is the thirteenth of October 1893, and I have some pleasant news for you. My studies began to-day, and I am very, very glad. I study arithmetic, Latin, history, geography and literature. I am glad, because I want to learn more and more about everything in this beautiful wonderful world. Every day I find how little I know : for I catch glimpses on all sides of treasures of history, language and science, a beautiful world of knowledge, and I long to see everything, know everything, and learn everything. I do not feel discouraged when I think how much I have to learn, because I know the dear Lord has given me an eternity in which to learn it.

“ I used to say I did not like arithmetic very well, but now I have changed my mind ! for I see what a good, useful study it is. It helps me to think clearly and logically and strengthens my mind in many ways. I try to be very, very calm and patient now when the examples seem very hard, but sometimes in spite of my great effort to keep my mind in the right place, it will flutter like a little bird in a cage and try to escape into the pleasant sunshine ; for nice and useful as arithmetic is, it is not as interesting to me as a beautiful poem, or a lovely story.

“ Latin is a very beautiful language, and I hope I shall be able to speak and read much of it when I go home next spring. Already I begin to feel better acquainted with the grand old heroes of Rome since I know a little of the language in which they thought and talked so long ago.”

But, in the words of her faithful teacher, Miss Sullivan,

“ It is Helen’s loving and sympathetic heart rather than her bright intellect which endears her to everybody with whom she comes in contact. She impresses me every day as being the happiest child in the world, and so it is a special privilege to be with her. The spirit of love and joyousness seems never to leave her. May it ever be so. It is beautiful

to think of a nature so gentle, pure and loving as hers ; it is pleasant also to think she will ever see only the best side of every human being. While near her the roughest man is all gentleness, all pity ; not for the world would he have her know that he is aught but good and kind to every one. So we see, pathetic as Helen's life must always seem to those who enjoy the blessings of sight and hearing, that it is nevertheless full of brightness, cheer, courage and hope."

In October, 1894, Helen Keller attended a term at a select school for the deaf in New York City, mainly for the purpose of perfecting her articulation, and to continue her study of Latin, French, and German. In 1896 in Cambridge she entered upon her preparatory studies for admission to Radcliffe College (the Harvard Annex for women), which she resolutely determined to achieve if possible. Of her studies and examination there, Mr Arthur Gilman, whose school she attended, speaks as follows :

" She was successful in every subject, and took ' honors ' in English and German. I think that I may say that no candidate in Harvard or Radcliffe was graded higher than Helen in English. The result is remarkable, especially when we consider that Helen has been studying on strictly College preparatory lines for *one year* only. She had had long and careful instruction, it is true, and she had always the loving ministrations of Miss Sullivan in addition to the inestimable advantage of a concentration that the rest of us never know. No man or woman has ever in my experience got ready for these examinations in so brief a time. How has it been accomplished ? By a union of patience, determination and affection, with the foundation of an uncommon brain."

The major portion of the time between this and the final examination which resulted (July 4th, 1899) in her being formally admitted to the Freshman class, was devoted to study under a special instructor, Mr Merton S. Keith, of Cambridge, Mass., assisted by Miss Sullivan. Of her labors during this period, Mr Keith says :

" It is idle to inquire whether Miss Keller's achievements are due to innate abilities or qualities, or to expert teaching. In cases like Miss Keller's it seems to me that good teaching and proper environment are even more necessary than in the case of the common student. More pitfalls have been in her way, and careful guidance has often been absolutely necessary.

“With all her innate and acquired powers of mind, she could not have attained her present eminence, had it not been for the moral, or quasi-moral qualities of her soul. Ambition, undaunted courage, defiance of, or glorying over obstacles, obstinate refusal to admit defeat, hope rising from incipient despair, self-respect and self-trust, patience and faith in planning or working, or waiting for the consummation of effort,—these constitute her armor of victory.

“Great as have been her achievements, equal results are, I believe, within the reach of many others. The merely intellectual qualities needed are not rare ; it is their combination with moral power that produces the seemingly magic results. Ambition stimulated by obstacles, persistent will and patience, explain many of the wonders of Helen Keller’s success.”

Of Mr Keith’s instruction, Helen says :

“I have enjoyed my work with Mr Keith more than I can express in words. He has done more than any of my teachers except Miss Sullivan (although she seems more like a part of myself than a teacher), to store my mind with rich treasures of knowledge, which shall be a joy to me as long as I live. He made all my studies interesting, even mathematics. He kept my mind alert and eager, and trained to reason clearly, and to seek conclusions calmly and logically instead of jumping wildly into space, as it were, and arriving nowhere. He was always gentle and forbearing no matter how dull I might be, and believe me, my stupidity would often have exhausted the patience of that phenomenally patient man, Job.”

In a letter to me, speaking of the examination admitting her to Radcliffe, she says :

“It is an unspeakable relief to know that I have passed the examination with credit. But what I consider my crown of success is the happiness and pleasure that my victory has brought to my dear teacher. Indeed, I feel that the success is her’s more than mine ; for she is my constant inspiration.”

In the college classrooms Miss Keller required the constant presence of Miss Sullivan, who could spell into her hand with ample rapidity all that the instructors read or spoke. Should a professor ask questions, Miss Sullivan repeated audibly whatever Miss Keller would answer, or, when allowed, she handed in after recitations the latter’s typewritten answers.

The spirit which animated Miss Keller in her studies is briefly and best told by her in a letter to Professor Copeland of the Harvard faculty :

"I am resolved to be myself, and to write my own thoughts when I have any. When I have written something that seems to be fresh and spontaneous and worthy of your criticisms, I will bring it to you, if I may, and if you think it good, I shall be happy; but if your verdict is unfavorable, I shall *try again, and yet again* until I have succeeded in pleasing you. . . ."

It would be deeply interesting, did time allow, could we follow Miss Keller during her career at college, to observe the unvanquishable attitude she persistently assumed in overcoming the manifold difficulties that confronted her, but I must desist and simply state that I personally attended her graduation from Radcliffe, at Cambridge, on the 28th of June, 1904 (one day after the twenty-fourth anniversary of her birth), and witnessed, amidst continuous applause, the award to her and thirty-seven classmates of the degree of Bachelor of Arts, coupled in her case with the distinction "*cum laude*," and the additional words in Latin inscribed on her diploma: "Not only approved in the whole academic course, but excellent in English letters." The ovation given her at the time reflected credit alike on herself and the vast audience in attendance.

At a recent alumnæ meeting, among other things she modestly stated:

"You will not misunderstand me if I say that much of my life in college has been tedious; slowness was unavoidable in the manual labor of Miss Sullivan's task and mine, . . . In study I have fallen heir to no end of interest and delight. How eagerly I look forward to a new book! As I read, there is a light before me; it is the radiance of poetry. . . . College has breathed new life into my mind, given me new ideas of things, a perception of new truths, and new aspects of the old ones. I grow stronger in my conviction that there is nothing good or right which we cannot accomplish if we have the will to strive. The assured reality and nearness of the end of my schooldays fills me with bright anticipations. The doors of the great world are flung open before me, and a light shines upon me, the light kindled by thought that there is something for me to do beyond the threshold.

"And indeed, for all earnest college graduates there is a great work in the world—work that can be done in sweet, unaggressive ways. There are harsh customs to be made sweet with love; hearts in which a kind, tolerant brotherly love must be awakened; time-hallowed prejudices

that must be overthrown. One evil that must be checked is the ignorance of the *learned* who have never learned the simple, honest language of the heart, which is the most vital of all languages, and is more satisfying than all the Greek and Latin ever written. Thus I have groped my way through college, reaching out on the dark pathway for wisdom, for friendship, and for work. I have found much work, and abundant friendship, and a little wisdom, and I ask for no other blessedness."

Her exceptional achievement is well summarized by Mr John A. Macy, the able editor of her invaluable volume, *The Story of My Life*, dedicated "to ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL, who has taught the Deaf to speak, and enabled the listening ear to hear speech from the Atlantic to the Rockies."

Mr Macy says :

"The result of her work is to set a new standard for the deaf, and to raise a standard high, if not new, for the whole world of men who work and pray. She has moved the hearts of all nations to an enduring sympathy for the afflicted, and to a new belief in the capacity for the blind and the deaf to be uplifted. Thereby is Helen Keller's service great unto those who see, and those who are blind, to those who hear, and those whose ears hear not.

"It is safe to predict that her work will go further than the goal which is marked by her graduation. This, all who know her well will readily affirm."

As to her future occupation, the public may rest assured it will, in substance, consist of *service to her fellow man*. "Opportunities to serve others," she says herself, "offer themselves constantly ; it bewilders me to think of the countless tasks that may be mine." To prove helpful she realizes the imperative necessity of continuing to improve her mind by engaging in research and keeping well abreast of the best wisdom of the age. Writing will, no doubt, occupy a large portion of her time, and to judge from what has so far emanated from her pen, future productions from the same source will prove interesting, uplifting, and of enduring service.

Let me now quote a few of the many striking pen pictures Miss Keller has already given us, relate several of many incidents, and state her creed.

Speaking of one of her favorite resorts near her home in Ala-

bama, she says in one of her earliest letters: "The mountains are crowding round the springs to look at their own beautiful reflections."

Being asked for a sentiment, she said:

"Knowledge is happiness. . . . Knowledge of the thoughts and deeds that have marked man's progress is to feel the great heart-throbs of humanity through centuries, and if one does not feel in these pulsations a heavenward striving, one must indeed be deaf to the wonderful harmonies of life."

Literature is Miss Keller's "Utopia." She says:

"Here I am not disfranchised. No barrier of the senses shuts me out from the sweet, gracious discourse of my book-friends: they talk to me without embarrassment or awkwardness. The things I have learned, and the things I have been taught, seem of ridiculously little import, compared with *their* large loves and heavenly charities."

Again:

"Be of good cheer. Do not think of today's failures, but of the success that may come tomorrow.

"Remember no effort that we make to attain something beautiful is ever lost. Sometime, somewhere, somehow we shall find that which we seek."

At another time she says:

"It is not always needful for Truth to take a definite shape; enough, if it hovers about us like a spirit wafted through the air like the sound of a bell, grave and kindly."

Speaking of a visit made to Lexington, she wrote:

"As we rode along we could see the forest monuments bend their proud forms to listen to the little children of the woodlands whispering their secrets. The anemone, the wild violets, the hepatica and the funny little curled-up ferns all peeped out at us from beneath their brown leaves."

In another letter after leaving the country to reside in Boston, she thus expresses herself about the public park, or Common:

"Somehow after the great fields and pastures, and lofty pinegroves of the country, the scene here seems shut in and conventional. Even the

trees seem citified and self-conscious. Indeed I doubt if they are on speaking terms with their country cousins ! I cannot help feeling sorry for these trees with all their fashionable airs. They are like the people whom they see every day, who prefer the crowded city to the quiet and freedom of the country. They do not even suspect how circumscribed their lives are. They look down pityingly on the country folk who have never had an opportunity to see the great world. O my, if they only realized their limitations, they would flee for their lives to the woods and fields ! ”

At another time, in speaking of Autumn, she says :

“ The forest trees have donned
Their gorgeous Autumn tapestries
. . . A mysterious hand is silently stripping the trees,
And with rustle and whirr the leaves descend,
And like little frightened birds,
Lie trembling on the ground. ”

One of her letters closes with : “ I must go to bed, for Morpheus has touched my eyelids with his golden wand. ”

In giving Doctor Bell an account of one of her dreams, after describing a curious house, and saying that the people in it wore breastpins on their shoes, bangles on their heads, and rings on their wrists, Doctor Bell queried : “ Do you mean you saw them with your eyes ? ” She replied, “ Yes. ”

How Miss Keller looks upon her limitations, she thus expresses herself to me in a recent letter :

“ When I think of the truths which have been brought within my reach, I am strong and full of joy. I am no longer deaf and blind ; for with my spirit I see the glory of the all-perfect that lies beyond the physical sight, and hear the triumphant song of love which transcends the tumult of this world. What appears to be my affliction is due to the obscurity, yea, the darkness occasioned by terrestrial things. I cannot help smiling sometimes at the arrogance of those who think they alone possess the earth ; they see only shadows and know only in part. They little dream that the soul is the only reality, the life, the power that makes harmony out of discord, completeness out of incompleteness. ”

Hellen Keller's rules of life and creed may best be summed up as noted in a diary entry made October 18, 1894, at the age of fourteen years, when she says:

“I find that I have four things to learn in my school life, and indeed in life: To think clearly without hurry or confusion, to love everybody sincerely, to act in everything with the highest motives, and to trust in dear God unhesitatingly.”

And in her latest work, *Optimism*, she sums up her creed as follows:

“I believe in God, I believe in man, I believe in the power of the spirit. I believe it is a sacred duty to encourage ourselves and others: to hold the tongue from any unhappy word against God's world, because no man has any right to complain of a universe which God made good, and which thousands of men have striven to keep good. I believe that we should so act that we may draw nearer and more near the age when no man shall live at his ease while another suffers.”

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